(*a*) A preventive station should be established in the sea near Alleppey to prevent thefts of articles exported from, and imported into, the several ports.

(*b*) Convenient landing ghauts should be built on the sides of the Alleppey Commercial Canal, from the Iron Bridge to the Beach.

(*c*) In the interests of trade, a bridge should be constructed at Chungum or, if the cost was considered prohibitive, an iron bridge in a north-to-south direction should be built from the existing bridge.

(*d*) The articles brought to Alleppey from Cochin and other places and those taken from Alleppey were being stolen by the boatmen. Such cases of thefts should be made directly cognisable by the Police.

(*e*) If a copra merchant had one Head office and 2 or 3 branch offices, license fees should be charged only in respect of the Head office.

(*f*) The price of paddy imported from Rangoon, Akyab, &c., had gone up considerably on account of the prohibitive shipping charges. The Government should hire one or two ships and arrange for paddy being imported in such ships. That was sure to effect a substantial reduction in the price of paddy.

(*g*) In respect of civil suits, interest was awarded in some cases at the rate of 12 per cent and in other cases at 6 per cent, from the date of the plaint to the date of judgment. Suits were on that account being prolonged needlessly. The Member prayed that a law might be enacted allowing interest at the rate of 12 per cent from the date of suit to the date of judgment. It would be to the interests of traders, if interest could be allowed at the rate of 12 per cent even subsequent to the date of judgment. If that was not possible, they should be enabled to realise interest at the rate of 12 per cent at least till the date of judgment.

Dewan's reply.—Noted.

22. Some disabilities of the Trading Classes.

Mr. S. V. E. A. Manikkam Chettiyar (Member, Nominated) first spoke about the advantages to a country if its commerce were to be developed and said that Government ought to render financial aid. The local branch of the Bank of Madras was not of such great help as the people once thought ; and so the best way of affording financial relief to the people was by establishing a State Bank as in Mysore. The next suggestion of the Member was that a separate Department of Commerce should be organized to develop trade, to find out proper markets for the articles produced in the State and also to buy at moderate prices whatever things Travancore stood in need of. In his opinion, the Departments of Industries and Co-operation could be placed under one and the same officer and a journal published for disseminating useful knowledge in commercial and trading matters. In view of the vast strides Japan had made in the development of trade, a competent person might be deputed to Japan to study the subject. Another direction in which action could be taken was by establishing a Commercial Institute at Trivandrum or by offering grants-in-aid to private institutions started and conducted by competent gentlemen.

Dewan's reply.—Noted.

23. Mercantile business.

Mr. Arumukhaperumal Muthuswami (Member, Trading Classes, Kottar) said that there were 15 timber depôts in Kottar, Vadasseri and other places. Large sums of money were being realized at timber auctions held six times a year in the Nagercoil and Thuckalay Depôts. Valuable timber, including royal trees, was being felled and sold as fuel which resulted in great loss both to Government and the merchants. Out of the quantity of timber sold for purposes of house-building, only one-fourth was available for such purposes, the remainder being useful only for fuel. Still, foreigners were purchasing such timber and utilising it for building purposes, thus placing local merchants at a distinct disadvantage even in regard to such timber. That there was great loss both to the Government and the public would be seen from the auction lists during the past few

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years. On account of the indiscriminate stocking of valuable timber and fuel-timber, there was also smuggling going on. When, in 1088, 1089 and 1090, passes were issued at one rupee per cart-load of fuel, there was a restriction that no royal trees should be cut and consequently there was no loss to Government. But now royal trees were being cut and sold by bandy men freely without being detected by the Forest Department. It was, therefore, necessary that Government should levy Rs. 2 for a pass and also restrict the felling to trees other than royal trees.

The Member then spoke about the desirability of Government ascertaining the assets and liabilities of Hundi merchants and seeing that the Hundi firms were duly registered. Their accounts also should be audited at the end of every year by a qualified agency under Government control. Under existing conditions of working of the Hundi firms, the people were often put to heavy loss.

The last suggestion of the Member was that the large forest areas now under grass could be planted with cotton the price of which had greatly increased and that a mill could be opened for making thread out of cotton which, while giving employment to several people, would also reduce the price of cotton and cloth.

Dewan's reply.—Noted.

24. The Government and Trade in Alleppey.

Mr. N. A. Mahomed Kunju (Member, Nominated) said that the trade of Alleppey was declining day by day and it was time that the Government bestowed serious attention to the subject. There were not sufficient facilities for trade in Alleppey as in foreign commercial ports and towns. At present the volume of trade at Alleppey was insignificant when compared with the trade of Cochin. By comparing the value of articles exported through the ports at Alleppey and Arukutty during the past 9 years, the Member sought to establish that articles to the value of 98 lakhs of rupees per annum were exported through Arukutty in excess of the articles exported from the Alleppey Port. On account of the omission to provide a monsoon port during the past two years, the traders of Alleppey were forced to send their articles to Madras, Negapatam, Tuticorin and other places for export and they had to suffer much loss on that account. Paddy from Burma was being imported through the Cochin Port at a cheaper rate than through Alleppey with the result that Alleppey traders had to depend on the Cochin Port for the cheap supply of paddy. The steamers from London, America, &c., always touched at the Cochin Port and hence the coir bales, coir mats, cocoanut oil &c., from the Alleppey town were being taken to Cochin for export. The above difficulties had discouraged many flourishing merchants of Alleppey and trade on the western portion of the town had considerably gone down. The export trade of Cochin had increased several fold. If the question of opening a harbour at Cochin also became an accomplished fact, then the Alleppey Port would lose all its importance and usefulness. The Member, therefore, submitted the following prayers for the early consideration of Government:—

(1) A harbour should be opened at the Alleppey Port.

(2) The Government should establish a Bank for the benefit of merchants.

(3) The Commercial Canal at Alleppey should be improved and arrangements made to deepen the canal every year.

(4) Industrial institutions should be established.

(5) In order to promote the interests of commercial classes, Committees should be organized in important commercial centres similar to the British Chamber of Commerce.

(6) A permanant Economic Conference should be organized like the one established in Mysore with merchants, agriculturists, and learned representatives of the people as members and the work and suggestions of the Conference made known to the people at the sessions of the Popular Assembly.

Dewan's reply.—Noted.

The Assembly adjourned at 5 P. M.

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